

REMARKS

Claims 23-47 are pending in this application. By this Reply, the specification and claims 23, 24, 29, 31, 33-36, 38, 39, 44, and 46 are amended, and claim 22 is cancelled. No new matter is added. Prompt examination and allowance of this application are respectfully requested.

Initially, Applicant thanks Examiner Kim for indicating that claims 23-47 contain allowable subject matter. As discussed below, claim 23 is amended to include the features of claim 22, and claim 22 is canceled. Thus, all of the pending claims are allowable over the prior art of record.

Applicant notes that the Office Action Summary does not acknowledge Applicant's claim for foreign priority of Italian Application No. TO2000A000333 filed April 7, 2000 or receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner acknowledge Applicant's claim for foreign priority and receipt of the priority documents in the next communication to Applicant from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

In the Office Action, the Examiner commented on the language and format of the abstract of the disclosure. Accordingly, Applicant submits a replacement Abstract on a separate sheet attached hereto, which complies with 37 C.F.R. § 1.72.

The Examiner objected to claims 29, 31, 35, 36, and 44 because the term "Q_b" is allegedly not described in claims 29, 35, and 44; because the terms "P_{bo}" and "P_{bi}" are allegedly introduced in reverse order in claims 31, 36, and 46; and because of a typographical error in the preamble of claim 36. Although Applicant does not

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necessarily agree with these objections, claims 29, 31, 35, 36, 44, and 46 are amended to clarify the claim language. Accordingly, Applicant requests that these objections to the claims be withdrawn.

In the Office Action, claims 23, 24, 33, 34, 38, and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as allegedly being indefinite. Applicant traverses this rejection and submits that these claims are definite. Nonetheless, claims 23, 24, 33, 34, 38, and 39 are amended to recite a description of the acronyms "FF," "TMP_{ave}," and "K_{uf}," as suggested by the Examiner, and to clarify the claim language without altering the scope of these claims. Therefore, Applicant submits that the § 112 rejection should be withdrawn.

The Examiner also rejected claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,762,805 to Truitt et al. in view of patent publication WO 98/50091 A1. As mentioned above, claim 22 is canceled, and claim 23 is amended into independent form. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the § 103(a) rejection of claim 22 should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that all of the pending claims are patentable and in condition for allowance. Applicant therefore requests prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability of the pending claims.

The Office Action contains characterizations of the claims and the related art with which Applicant does not necessarily agree. Unless expressly noted otherwise, Applicant declines to subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

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The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at (202) 408-4252 if the Examiner deems that a telephone conversation would further the prosecution of the application.

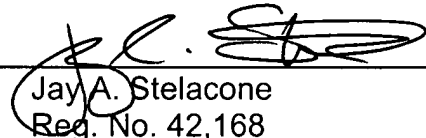
If there is any fee due in connection with the filing of this Amendment, please charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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GARRETT & DUNNER, L.L.P.

Dated: December 10, 2003

By: _____


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